

**ICHLA Education Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**IGCS-Conference RM 12**  
**Wednesday, September 20, 2006**  
**3:30-5:00 p.m.**

**Committee Members:**

Christine Cde. Baca- Commissioner and Chair of Education Committee  
Hilda Vázquez – Commissioner  
Marilee Updike – Indianapolis Public Schools  
Maria Dalhoumi – East Chicago Schools  
Sara Williams – Indiana Partnerships Center  
Kathryn Lee – Indiana Civil Rights Commission

**ICHLA Staff Members:**

Laura Barrett  
Ryan C. Marques

**I. Welcome**

Chair Cde. Baca welcomed and thanked everyone in attendance. Chair Cde. Baca preceded on with the introduction of Commissioner Vázquez and her presentation regarding 2006 ISTEP + Accommodations for LEP Students.

**II. Brief Presentation from Hilda Vazquez/IDOE**

**A. 2006 ISTEP + Accommodations for LEP Students**

Commissioner Vázquez stated that Director Mendoza and Staff Laura Barrett had questions prior to this meeting regarding ISTAR and Commissioner Vazquez wanted to clear concerns and update all members on the status of ISTAR.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that Indiana is a fall assessment state and the ISTEP window just began this past Monday. Commissioner Vázquez stated that she brought information regarding the details of testing LEP students which has been published for a month on the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE) webpage. Commissioner Vázquez stated that many educators and administration throughout the state still perceive the notion that they will be testing LEP students through the ISTAR test. Commissioner Vázquez explained that the ISTAR was not approved for use as an alternate academic assessment for LEP students, therefore, educators and administrators should read the new rules concerning testing procedures for LEP students.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that she presented a PowerPoint presentation last week regarding the most current assessment requirements for LEP students according to Title III. Commissioner Vázquez supplied the committee with her PowerPoint slides. Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that the goals of Title III for LEP students are to attain English proficiency, to develop high levels of academic achievement, and also to meet the same academic standards as all students.

Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that as part of a U.S. Department of Education Peer Review, one of the sections reviewed was academic assessment. Based on this review, the U.S. Department of Education determined that the ISTAR was not appropriate as an alternate academic assessment for LEP students. Therefore, ISTAR will not be used to test LEP students this fall. Commissioner Vázquez stated that all LEP students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for one year or more will participate fully in the ISTEP + assessment program. For those LEP students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for less than a year, school corporations are required to administer ISTEP + math and science assessments for these students. In terms of ISTEP + English/language arts assessments for these students, corporations have two options: Administer the English/Language arts portion of ISTEP + or Administer the LAS Links English Language Proficiency Assessment in the spring of 2007.

Commissioner Vázquez explained that her slides pertain to the 2006-2007 ISTEP + Program Manual, Chapter 3. Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that LEP students in their first year of enrollment in U.S. schools are required to participate in the math and science assessments but have the option of participating in the English/language Arts ISTEP + assessment or substituting the Spring 2007 LAS Links English Language Proficiency Assessment to meet this requirement. Participation in the LAS Links Placement Test does not qualify students for this flexibility.

Commissioner Vázquez preceded to mention that schools will be required to submit to the IDOE Division of Assessment an electronic list of all students (by STN and corresponding student name) falling into this category and must highlight those students who are coming from out-of-state. Commissioner Vázquez also explained that under Federal Flexibility, the students' ISTEP + scores will not be used as part of the Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) calculation for schools, and schools will be credited for participation.

Commissioner Vázquez then stated that the test results of first-year LEP students who take the ISTEP + English/language arts assessment are not included in AYP determinations. Commissioner Vázquez also mentioned that if these students take the LAS Links English language proficiency assessment, or the ISTEP + English/language arts assessment, they can be counted as participants toward meeting the 95 percent assessment participation requirement for English/language arts AYP determinations.

Commissioner Vázquez reiterated that beginning with the 2006-2007 test administration, the ISTAR alternate assessment is no longer an option for limited English proficient students. Instead, LEP students who have been enrolled in U.S. schools for one year or more will participate fully in the ISTEP + assessment program.

Commissioner Vázquez referred to the Fall 2006 ISTEP + Accommodations LEP handout. This handout states that students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) may be entitled to the assessment accommodations specified in their Individual Learning Plans (ILP). Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that decisions about testing accommodations are made on an individual basis and are a documented subset of the instructional accommodations received in the classroom. Commissioner Vázquez explained that the translation or interpretation of test directions or test content into a language other than English is not permissible.

Commissioner Vázquez read through the accommodations that are permitted but not documented which consist of: student provided additional breaks as necessary; test administered in several sessions; additional breaks between tests, if necessary; student is test in a small group setting; student is test individually; student has directions read to him or her; student has test administered by a familiar test administrator.

Commissioner Vázquez then read through the accommodations that are permitted and documented which consist of: student provided extended testing time for each session; student uses an approved bilingual word-to-word dictionary; all test questions are read to the student; math and science test items and answer options are read verbatim (in English) to student.

Laura Barrett questioned the authentic assessment.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that ISTAR was an alternative assessment, but this alternate assessment was not approved, but some other state's alternate assessments were approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Ms. Updike questioned which states' alternative assessment were approved.

Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that South Carolina, Tennessee or Delaware were approved with recommendations. This is according to information the IDOE received in the spring, therefore, IDOE is unsure if there have been changes to the respective states' LEP assessments after this date.

Commissioner Vázquez explained that Indiana is currently partnering with other states regarding LEP tests in order to design a test where unnecessary wording would be eliminated for math questions and possibly the creation of a native language assessment. Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that these ideas may or may not actually come to fruition in Indiana.

Ms. Lee stated that it is too bad that these LEP students could not take the test in their native language.

Commissioner Vázquez and Ms. Updike stated that many of these LEP students are not literate in their native language. In addition, instruction in Indiana classrooms is not provided in students' native language.

Laura Barrett stated that it is too bad that these LEP students are not receiving bilingual education in the classroom.

Commissioner Cde. Baca mentioned that in Colorado some districts do have bilingual education and tests are given in Spanish where many of these LEP students scored very high on their state wide assessment test.

Ms. Updike explained the problems that she confronted this week during the ISTEP + testing process. She explained the problems that many LEP students faced this time such as their lack of vocabulary and misunderstanding of words such as uneven.

Commissioner Cde. Baca stated that many of these LEP students will try to answer questions in how they perceive things in their mind and how they relate it to what they know. She then explained an example of a question that was proposed on a test: How many items are in a dozen? Commissioner Cde. Baca stated that many Hispanic/Latino students who answer this question would answer it by stating a dozen tomas. Commissioner Cde. Baca's point is that when LEP students hear a word they relate it directly to what they know.

Commissioner Vázquez mentioned that other states are researching efforts in areas where students would be measured in a dual assessment test.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that there are many school administrators still calling the IDOE in order to make sure that their dictionaries comply with IDOE's standards.

Ms. Updike stated that these accommodations need to be simplified.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that these accommodations are pulled from the manual and have been presented in many workshops. She also stated that there is still a miscommunication between administrators due to how they still perceive that they must administer the ISTAR.

Laura Barrett asked if this information could be sent to teachers directly.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that they can be added to the list serve, but usually the director for testing at each school receives the emails and is their responsibility to communicate new items to teachers.

Ms. Updike stated that a major hurdle to this whole testing process is the poor timing.

Commissioner Cde. Baca referred to the an article published in the *Indianapolis Star* (“States moves closer to dumping ISTEP”) which was published today and mentioned the possibility of terminating the ISTEP by next year.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that the Director of Testing for IDOE is exploring the possibility of administering further Linking Studies in order to gain federal approval to administer the ISTAR test as an alternative test in future years.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that there is insufficient data in order to run reliability studies regarding the ISTAR assessment at this time.

Commissioner Cde. Baca asked how many other states have fall testing.

Ms. Updike stated that only 3 other states have fall testing.

Commissioner Cde. Baca asked if fall testing is the largest issue confronting testing assessment.

Ms. Updike mentioned the option of taking the base line off of alternative testing for LEP students.

Commissioner Vázquez stated that IDOE will continue working with the Division of School Assessment.

Ms. Updike mentioned that every educator should be aware of programs such as “Reading First.” She explained that there is no research or data on the success of “Reading First.”

Commissioner Cde. Baca thanked Commissioner Vázquez about her information.

### **III. Authentic Assessment and Dropout Recovery Project**

Laura Barrett asked about the details for authentic assessment.

Commissioner Vázquez explained that authentic assessment is a way in which you can measure actual performance and knowledge instead of testing proficiency. Authentic assessment consists of oral assessment, rubric assessment and portfolio assessment.

Ms. Lee also explained that authentic assessment pairs with different teaching patterns such as differentiated instruction. This would allow children to learn in different ways which then testing would have to be customized in a way that would adhere to these new patterns of instruction in order to assess these children in a correct manner.

Ms. Updike stated that there are some key schools in Indianapolis that focus on this type of teaching pattern (differentiated instruction).

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that the authentic assessment is a progressive manner to assess.

Laura Barrett stated that the dropout recovery project will be discussed later. Laura Barrett proceeded on to discuss the recommendations that were submitted in the packet. Most of the recommendations are bullet pointed and follow under the following topics: Adult Education, Teacher Education, Higher Education Assistance, Mentors/Internships, School Assessments, Change Educational Focus, Pilot Programs.

Laura stated that a correction was made regarding that there are currently only 3 districts that have bilingual programs: East Chicago, Hammond & South Bend. In addition to the correction, the State cannot recommend one model over another; a model depends on the needs/staff.

Laura Barrett explained the Dropout Recovery Project and referred everyone to the page submitted in the packet. Laura mentioned that this project was created through legislation in 1991. She then stated that the Indiana State Attendance Officer initiated the Dropout Recovery Project as a program to facilitate contact between authorized programs and agencies, which are equipped to provide adult education services, and youth who have dropped out of school who may benefit from them. Laura also explained that these names are available only to those who have established programs to serve the returning student, and may be retrieved by county or school corporation number. Laura stated that there are 50 adult education programs across Indiana that have responded and are participating in the program, including Job Corps, Ivy Tech and Workforce Development.

Ryan Marques explained a study from the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research which touched upon Indiana's graduation rate. He preceded to explain the 4 main points which were outlined on the conclusion page of the report, which notes that Indiana's graduation rate has clearly been downward for more than a decade rather than what the Indiana Department of Education promotes as upward achievement in graduation rates. Ryan mentioned that anyone can access this report by visiting [www.sipr.org](http://www.sipr.org)

Ms. Lee encouraged all committee members to visit the IDOE's website and look under enrollment projections and then compare those numbers to the number of 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in order to see the truth of the graduation rates.

Commissioner Cde. Baca asked if there is only a certain percentage that one can report for AYP regarding LEP students.

Ms. Updike stated that there is not a percentage. She also stated that nothing will be determined until the end of December 2006 regarding school testing results and who has been counted regarding AYP.

Ms. Updike stated that she had experienced due hardships when trying to purchase dictionaries that complied with IDOE's standards.

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that she was able to give those dictionaries to the student's parents in order for the students to study at home with the parents in the East Chicago School System.

#### **IV. Discussion about ESL program problems/concerns**

##### **A. Maria Dalhoumi**

Laura Barrett asked Ms. Dalhoumi to describe some problems that she faces regarding her ESL program in the East Chicago School System.

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that she feels that her system is improving each and every year, but one problem is the ISTEP + test. She stated that she has dealt with it and will continue to do so. She also stated that the "Reading First" program has benefited her school system in many ways and many LEP students have completed this program successfully.

Ms. Dalhoumi did state that one main problem is the outreach to parents of LEP students. She stated that her school system must improve their outreach efforts to these parents. She also mentioned that she is stretched with resources regarding how LEP teachers and TESOL teachers will be utilized in the "Reading First" program. Ms. Dalhoumi also stated that there has been national research that shows high success rates for LEP students in the "Reading First" program. Ms. Dalhoumi stated that she would send the information as soon as possible.

Laura Barrett asked Ms. Dalhoumi if there were any changes that she would change regarding her program.

Ms. Dalhoumi mentioned that a peer tutoring program or a mentorship program from business professionals around the community would benefit these students ten fold.

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that there needs to be more funding for a mentorship or tutoring project.

Ms. Updike stated that the need for Driver's Licenses (Privilege Card) of undocumented parents whose children are LEP students is very prevalent due to re-districting changes. Ms. Updike explained that many parents confront her on the challenges that they face when trying to transport their children to schools without a driver's license or privilege card.

Ms. Updike also mentioned that many undocumented parents cannot participate in volunteer opportunities with their child's school due to how they cannot receive a criminal background check without a Social Security Number.

Sara Williams stated that she conversed with Attorney Angela Iza regarding how one can receive a background check without a Social Security Number. She also stated that Angela sent an email entailing how one can receive a background check where only fingerprints are necessary.

Ms. Updike asked where one can receive this type of background check.

Sara Williams stated that the email specifies the exact location.

Ms. Updike asked if the City-County building knows this information.

Sara Williams stated that she does not know.

Commissioner Cde. Baca asked if Sara Williams could forward the information to the committee members regarding background checks without Social Security Numbers.

Sara Williams asked Laura Barrett how these recommendations made from this committee will impact students, parents and educators, and who will be reading this information.

Laura Barrett informed Sara Williams that the Commission identifies and researches issues affecting the Hispanic/Latino community and also promotes cooperation and understanding between the Hispanic/Latino communities and other communities throughout the state. Most importantly, the Commission reports to the legislative council and the Governor on issues and recommendations that have been discussed during the Commission's committee meetings such as this one.

Laura Barrett stated that this year the Commission will be writing separate committee reports in order to provide a more specific approach to addressing each committee's issues and provide the legislative council a more detailed report for each committee.

Commissioner Cde. Baca stated that the Indiana Civil Rights Commission has formed relationships with legislators in order to provide a synergy where those particular legislators could help implement the Commission's initiatives and goals into legislation such as the Culturally Competent code.

Laura Barrett stated that ICHLA has formed good relationships with legislators regarding ICHLA's Driver's License report and will continue to build relationships in order to implement ICHLA's recommendations and goals.



Ms. Lee stated that the Indiana Civil Rights Commission has formed a good relationship with Indiana Representative Luke Messer regarding the passing of the expulsion bill and many other bills last legislative session.

Ms. Lee stated that many legislators attended the Indiana Civil Rights Commission's Education Steering Committee last week and received a good response.

Sara Williams explained that the main goal of her organization is to empower parents and have parents become more involved with their child's education. She also stated that her organization has a Latino Parent Gathering where this focuses on bringing together a cohort group of parents and educators where they will develop a project that addresses certain problems in school such as reading standards. They also learn how to access the IDOE's webpage and look at their respective information on the webpage. Sara explained that their goal is to create 3 different sites across the state where Latino parents can bond together in order to create a group of parents that are well-informed of their child's right to education and in other piece of information that a well-informed parent should know about their school district. Sara stated that her organization would like to bring more bilingual employees on board, but funding is low.

Sara Williams stated that a big concern is that Latino parents are afraid to go into their child's school when problems arise. She expressed that Latino parents need to know their child's rights for education and become more informed on the ISTEP +.

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that there is a large need for a list of translators in her school district that address the Hispanic and Chinese community.

Ms. Updike stated that adequate funding is necessary for a perfect ESL program and where schools would not be punished by their AYP assessments. She also stated that many teachers still do not understand that brand new LEP students must take the ISTEP + math and science and Language/arts with accommodations or LAS Links.

Ms. Updike stated that only \$18 is apportioned to each LEP student as of right now.

## **V. ESL program models from other states**

Ms. Lee referred everyone to her report of ESL and Bilingual Program Models (September 1993) which depicted very essential factors when considering the selection of a Program Model for LEP and ESL students.

Ms. Lee explained that this report entailed a very good description of characteristics of an effective program for ESL and LEP students: High Expectations, Intensive staff development, expert instructional leaders and teachers, functional communication between teacher and students, organization of the instruction of basic skills, and involvement of majority and minority parents in formal parent support activities.

Ms. Lee stated that from all of the research that she has conducted, a central point continues to rise, which is the fact that teachers are not properly trained to teach ESL and LEP students.

Ms. Lee referred to her PowerPoint Presentation of California where the State of California will have two teacher training courses: one will be required immediately and by 2010 both courses will be required.

Ms. Lee also referred to an article that she submitted to each committee member which depicted information regarding problems and concerns that administrators and teachers face with ESL and LEP classes: shortage of bilingual teachers, influx of Hispanic immigrants enrolling into schools, students' misunderstanding of state wide tests/assessments.

Ms. Lee then referred to her PowerPoint Presentation of the *Texas Association for Bilingual Education*. Ms. Lee pointed out that this information touched upon an action plan that the state of Texas implemented in April 2006 which addressed the need to provide effective linguistic and academic instruction for English language learners in Texas. Ms. Lee referred to a chart within the presentation which depicted enrichment models and the performance of each model. The main point of this chart is to show the reader that the ESL Pullout model is not a successful one, therefore, the State of Texas drafted a law that will not allow school corporations to implement the ESL Pullout model. Ms. Lee also referred to the Dual Language Research portion of this presentation.

Ms. Lee referred to the PowerPoint Presentation that touched upon California's Challenges in Language Education, which depicted topics such as teacher preparation and professional development, program selection, design and implementation, and second language and academic content instruction based on high academic standards.

Ms. Lee then referred to a packet of language acquisition information which was implemented during her time as a teacher in the State of Washington which touched upon levels of first and second language acquisition and activities.

Ms. Lee referred to the LAU plan from the State of Maine which makes sure that qualifying LEP students are identified and placed in programs and services in accordance to statutory guidelines. The South Portland School Department is mentioned in this plan and states that it is the policy of this school department to comply with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against students on the basis of all civil rights categories.

Ms. Lee then referred to the "Reach Center" program, which was established in the State of Washington and addresses multicultural/global education initiatives. This article can be related to the culturally competent statute implemented by the Indiana Civil Rights Commission.

Ms. Lee referred to a packet of information that touched upon a work session for the Edmonds School District in the State of Washington in 1990. Ms. Lee mentioned that this information presented in the workshop asked crucial questions to teachers and administrators regarding ESL and LEP student curriculum/programs: How can we heighten awareness of ESL, What do we want our schools and staff to look like, Who needs to be involved, What do we need to know, How do we need to know, How to provide services, and How will we measure? Ms. Lee also referred everyone to the last page of this packet which touched upon best practices as to teaching skills for LEP and ESL students.

## **VI. Report Structure/Timeline**

Commissioner Cde. Baca started to explain the report structure and timeline for the Education Report.

Laura Barrett stated that there will be one more meeting in October for this committee and then hopefully establish a large meeting between the Indiana Civil Rights Education Steering Committee and the ICHLA Education Committee.

Laura Barrett stated that she would like everyone who is in attendance at this meeting to brainstorm some ideas in which they could implement for a perfect ESL program and then report those ideas back to the committee during the meeting in October. This will allow the ICHLA staff to develop sound and essential recommendations for the Governor and Legislative Council

Ms. Dalhoumi stated that one recommendation that she would like to implement is to create a piece of legislation that will increase the funding level for adult education across the state, including funding for childcare.

The ICHLA Education Committee will meet on October 23, 2006 from 2:30-4:00 p.m.